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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002955

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: JULY 2 MEETING OF CHARGE MNF-I CG WITH IRAQI
INTERIOR MINISTER

Classified By: Charge D' Affaires David M. Satterfield for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

SUMMARY

1. (C) At a July 2 meeting with Minister of Interior Baqr Jaber, the Charge raised reports of human rights abuses by the Wolf Brigade. Jaber agreed on the need to respect human rights, voiced interest in visiting the U.S., and expressed concern about media reports that the U.S. was negotiating with the insurgents. The MNF-I CG emphasized that media reports notwithstanding, the U.S. is not negotiating with the insurgents. Jaber suggested that Secretary Rice give a speech clarifying the U.S. role within a sovereign Iraq.
END SUMMARY.

PRINCIPAL ATTENDEES

2. (C) The principal attendees at the July 2 meeting were

-- Minister of Interior Baqr Jaber,

-- Charge d'Affaires David Satterfield,

-- Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF-I) Commanding General George Casey, and

-- IRMO-MOI Senior Advisor James Yellin.

TRIP TO UNITED STATES

3. (C) Jaber stated he would like to visit Washington in September to meet with Secretary Rice and Attorney General Gonzalez. The Charge encouraged the Minister to limit his trip to the United States to a few days so that he spend as little time out of Iraq as possible. The Charge further recommended the minister travel after the Labor Day holiday.

HUMAN RIGHTS

4. (C) The Charge noted reports that Wolf Brigade commandos were acting on behalf of the Badr Corps, and that the commandos had mistreated detainees and used excessive force during arrests. The Charge emphasized the need for the security forces to respect human rights and conduct themselves in way that is beyond reproach.

5. (C) Jaber denied the Wolf Brigade was acting on behalf of the Badr Corps. He agreed on the need to respect human rights. He added that he welcomed Embassy and Coalition information that would enable the MOI Inspector General to conduct investigations and file charges. He also said the Wolf Brigade is the most effective of the special police forces.

MEDIA REPORTS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH INSURGENTS

6. (C) The MNF-I CG emphasized that media reports notwithstanding, the U.S. is not negotiating with the insurgents.

7. (C) Jaber said media reports that Secretary Rumsfeld had said the U.S. was negotiating with the insurgents had negatively affected the morale of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the general public. Jaber suggested that Secretary Rice give a speech clarifying the U.S. role within a sovereign Iraq.

8. (C) The MNF-I CG pointed out that Secretary Rumsfeld had not said the U.S. is negotiating with the insurgents.

OPERATION AL BARQ

19. (C) Jaber also made the following remarks.

-- There is a need to build upon the success of Operation al Barq (a joint counterinsurgency operation in Baghdad conducted by the Iraqi ministries of Defense and Interior in conjunction with MNF-I's execution of Operation Squeeze Play).
-- A follow-on joint operation should focus on routes feeding into Baghdad, especially west of Abu Ghraib and east of Mada'in.

11. (C) Jaber said the success of al-Barq justified a reduction of the curfew from 10:00 p.m.-4:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.-4:00 a.m. The MNF-I CG expressed his support for a reduction of curfew hours.

OTHER OPERATIONAL MATTERS

12. (C) Jaber said the following about other operational matters.

-- Recent attacks by the insurgents reflect a strategic decision by them to place greater emphasis on targeting infrastructure as a way of weakening the government.
-- It would be useful to use tribal forces to help control the borders. He recently appointed a new Director General of Department of Border Enforcement, Major General Muhsan.
-- Potential areas for future joint operations include Mosul and Taji. (Jaber accepted an invitation by MNF-I CG to travel to Mosul regarding such operations.)
-- Police training by France would be welcome, provided it be conducted in Iraq. (Jaber noted that he resented past French support of the Saddam Hussein regime.)

13. (C) The MNF-I CG emphasized the need for coordination between the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense. He welcomed the recent formation of a joint planning group to prepare for future operations, such as security for elections. Jaber agreed on the need for coordination and on the utility of the joint planning group.

RELATIONS WITH ARAB NEIGHBORS

14. Jaber said the Syrians claim to be helping on border control, but have not demonstrated that they are doing so. The Charge encouraged Minister Jaber and his colleagues to keep pressure on Syria to work with the Iraqi government.

15. (C) The Charge also said the Embassy and MNF-I can help to establish a dialogue with the Saudi Interior Minister. Jaber replied that he would welcome such help.

16. (U) REO HILLAH, REO BASRAH, REO MOSUL, REO KIRKUK minimize considered.
Satterfield